

Enhanced 911 (E-911) is a crucial asset to this growing telecommunication society. When citizens are in need of an emergency response due to injury, illness, etc., they can dial 911 from their wireless telephone and know that the emergency dispatcher will automatically know their name, address, and phone number. With enhanced 911 system, it can reduce response time of police, fire and EMS services in times of need and when the caller is unable to communicate. Enhanced 911 serves as panacea in crisis situation, and therefore should be implemented in every mobile cellular phone. However, due to the rapid proliferation of wireless phones, this has resulted in a steady wearing away of the E-911 system. Some wireless phones do not currently provide emergency dispatchers with automated caller location or identification information. This has led to many instances where users who were unable to describe where they were or were physically unable to communicate where they were either.

As the number of wireless phone subscribers increases, there is a direct relationship with the percentage of 911 calls received from wireless phones. Current trends and quantitative analysis clearly demonstrates that by the year 2004, the majority of 911 calls will come from mobile wireless phones. With such a growing trend in mobile cell phone use, the implementation of E-911 in cell phones is critical in the protection of society.

There are many barriers, which prevent the implementation of E-911, such as, wireless 911 call routing, funding for necessary systems upgrades and closest call concept. Other issues include the lack of Universal Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) readiness, confidentiality, technological compatibility, and political and legislative issues. Funding for the technological upgrades for the preexisting cell phones without E-911 remains the pressing barrier in a lot of states. However, the idea of moving toward hardware and software upgrades is a promising idea to help implement E-911.

When 911 calls are made from wireless phones, the call does not automatically receive the location of the caller or the callback number. Many people purchase wireless cell phones primarily for safety reasons, such as myself, however few realize that E-911 service is not available to them. Cell phones without E-911 take extensive time, effort, and personnel to identify the caller's locations, and many times over-taxing the resources of the emergency dispatch center. They also create delays in response times that can mean the difference between life and death. With lives at risk, implementation of E-911 is important for the safety of our society. I strongly believe in E-911 and hope to see it implemented in more mobile cellular phones.